



Susan Bysiewicz
SECRETARY OF THE STATE
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BYSIEWICZ TAPPED TO NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO REFORM PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY CALENDAR

COUNTDOWN BEGINS: 100 DAYS UNTIL IOWA CAUCUS

Hartford: Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz was just appointed to the National Association of Secretaries of the State (NASS) subcommittee on Presidential Primaries. Secretary Bysiewicz will work with colleagues from across the country to establish a bipartisan solution to reform the way the two major parties choose their presidential nominee and stem the tide of states rushing to move up their presidential primaries and caucuses.

“If the current free-for-all system continues, we could potentially see primary voters doing their holiday season shopping and going to the polls on the same day,” said Bysiewicz, “The 2008 presidential primary calendar does not serve the best interest of the voters. We see more and more states trying to leapfrog one another in the race to cast the first ballot. We need a solution that is fair to the voters, fair to the candidates, and allows for a thorough vetting process.”

The 17 member subcommittee will convene next month in Washington D.C., to meet with representatives from the Democratic and Republican National Committees, make

recommendations to lawmakers and testify on the need to reform the primary process. NASS is hoping to generate support for the NASS Regional Rotating Presidential Primaries Plan. According to NASS, their proposal divides the country into four geographic areas—Eastern, Southern, Midwestern and Western—and rotates each region to vote first beginning in March. The other regions would hold their primary elections in April, May and June. A different part of the country would vote first every sixteen years. New Hampshire and Iowa would retain their early status to allow under-funded and less widely known candidates to compete through retail politics rather than the costly media-driven campaigns required in larger states.

This past March Secretary Bysiewicz held a news conference to propose legislation to move Connecticut's presidential primary from the first Tuesday in March to the first Tuesday in February. She was joined by voting rights advocates, State Senators Edward Meyer and Gayle Slossberg and promised to work toward reforming the primary process. On June 26th, Public Act 07132, An Act Concerning Presidential Preference Primary, was signed into law and officially changed Connecticut's presidential primary date to the first Tuesday in February.

“To leave the primary calendar the way it is just invites chaos,” said Bysiewicz, “In the absence of a rational primary process, we are seeing an ad-hoc national primary take shape. Connecticut didn't start this tidal wave but we could not stand by and allow our voters to become irrelevant. Ultimately, members of both political parties must come together and enact real reform.”